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At the November meeting of the Minnesota State Historical Society, Gen. E. C. Mason read an important paper upon the San Juan Island incident, in which he had a part.

The publishing house of Otto Wigand in Leipsic will issue a volume on Ebenezer and Amana, *Die wahre Inspirations-Gemeinde in Iowa*, by Professor Karl Knortz, of Evansville, Ind.

A review, partially historical in contents, called *La Biblioteca*, and published in Buenos Aires, began publication in June. It is to appear monthly. The July number contained an account of the Congreso Americano at Lima.

Noteworthy articles in periodicals: M. Staglieno, *Documenti relativi à Cristoforo Colombo ed alla sua famiglia* (La Cultura, July 15); M. Jimenez de la Espada, *Primer Siglo de la Universidad de Lima*, I (Revista Crítica de Historia y Literatura Españolas, August); W. Notman, *The Early Bermuda Church* (Presbyterian and Reformed Review, October); F. W. Grey, *The Jesuits and New France in the Seventeenth Century* (American Catholic Quarterly Review, October); *Codfish and Currency* (Nation, December 10); L. R. Harley, *The Redemptioners* (New England Magazine, October); A. McF. Davis, *The Currency Discussion in Massachusetts in the Eighteenth Century*, I (Quarterly Journal of Economics, October); C. Higham, *The Rev. Jacob Duché* (New-Church Magazine, September, October); Woodrow Wilson, *The First President of the United States* (Harper's Magazine, November); Horace Porter, *Campaigning with Grant* (Century Magazine, November, December).

We have received from the Chief of the Bureau of Rolls and Library in the Department of State, the official editor of the *Bulletins* of that bureau, the following communication:

In a notice of No. 7 of the Bulletin of the Bureau of Rolls and Library of the Department of State, in Vol. II, No. 1, of this REVIEW, October, 1896, page 188, the following passage occurs:

“ The only explanation given in these bulletins concerning this index is the following, printed at the head of the instalment in each issue: ‘ For the purposes of this index the several classes of papers deposited in the Bureau of Rolls and Library are considered as one collection. The bureau under existing equipment cannot confine its indexes or catalogues to any

one particular class or collection of papers without neglecting others to which there exists at present little, if any, clue.' "

The explanatory matter from the Bulletin appears at page 25 of Bulletin No. 1, and is repeated in Bulletin Nos. 3, 5 and 7.

The words quoted, however, are not "the only explanation given," for at page 4 of Bulletin No. 1 this announcement is made :

"It will be understood that as a rule no index given in the bulletin is complete in itself with respect to any one letter of the alphabet. It may, however, be found possible occasionally to print a complete catalogue of some particular class or collection of papers, as, for example, the Monroe Calendar."

While beginning with Bulletin No. 3, and repeated in Nos. 5 and 7, this memorandum is printed on the reverse of the title page in each case.

"Bulletin No. 1, issued September, 1893, contains (1) a catalogue exhibiting the existing arrangement of the papers of the Continental Congress; (2) a partial miscellaneous index of manuscripts of the Continental Congress examined to the date of going to press; (3) The Documentary History of the Constitution for the period preceding the Federal Convention—being the Annapolis Convention and credentials of delegates to the Federal Convention."

It is commonly known that there is no such index in existence as a complete index of the papers of the Continental Congress from which to select instalments for publication. The making of such an index, by the Bureau having custody of the papers with its present equipment, would require many years of constant application. (The Index Books of sixty years ago are incomplete, vague and generally inadequate to present demands.) And then, too, from 1775 to 1789, just as at the end of the nineteenth century, events occurred simultaneously or chronologically, not alphabetically. "Could a calendar of historical documents," the reviewer asks, "published at the end of the nineteenth century by one of the chief governments of the world, be constructed on principles more extraordinary?" Surely—with the utmost ease. Nothing could be simpler, nothing less "extraordinary" than the "principles" on which the index under ban is "constructed." It is a current index, arranged in alphabetical order, as far as it may have proceeded when the Bulletin goes to press, Bulletin by Bulletin. It is printed as quickly as made so that the present generation may enjoy some use of the papers of the Congress. The principles upon which it is constructed are exactly similar to the principles upon which a list of accessions to a library catalogue of books is constructed. This is a list of accessions to an index of collected manuscripts, published for immediate use; and it bears the same relation to a completed index as a library accession list bears to a completed catalogue. It was offered as a "partial miscellaneous index," not as a calendar; and until the appearance of the notice of Bulletin No. 7 in the REVIEW the published explanations of its character were

believed to be ample to meet the exactions of all intelligent investigators consulting the Bulletin. When finished and arranged it will be an Index of the Records of the Continental Congress constructed upon principles differing from those upon which the Monroe, Madison and Jefferson Calendars were constructed only as an Index differs from a Calendar. The simple question—the sole question is, shall nothing be given until the completion of the work, many years hence? —for there is no alternative. In other words, is that which is now given, in the Bulletin (as the manuscript is examined) better than nothing? The actual experience of constant correspondence answers most emphatically that it *is* better than nothing. Intelligent and legitimate criticism is most welcome; but there is a limit. Such criticism must be well informed. An assault, based upon lack of care or apprehension—insufficient information—is another matter. An essay at ridicule to support a point without existence serves no purpose.

A. H. A.

[I must apologize for having overlooked any portion of Mr. Allen's exposition of the method which he is following; and I should be sorry to be thought to visit with other than legitimate criticism a series so useful and to which we are all so much indebted. But I fear that the nature of my criticism on the section in question has been misunderstood. The essential part of it may be restated in the following form: The matter headed "Miscellaneous Index" in *Bulletins* 1, 3, 5, 7, is almost exclusively a calendar to Chapter A, No. 78, in the archives, *i. e.*, substantially, to the letters to the President of Congress, exclusive of those addressed to him by the heads of the executive departments, the agents of the United States in foreign countries and those of foreign states in America, and the general officers of the army—a collection of twenty-four volumes of related matter. Nearly all of these volumes, it appears, have now been indexed. My contention was, that the convenience of students would have been much better subserved if all these index-entries had been allowed to wait during these two or three past years, and had then been brought out in one alphabet. It is true that the events of the Revolution did not happen, nor were these letters written, in an alphabetical order. But Mr. Allen has arranged them in an alphabetical order. My complaint was, in effect, that these items appeared in the *Bulletins* not in one alphabet, but in four. The matter embraced in Chapter A, No. 78, having a certain unity, and the volumes being large, a unification of the index appeared to me highly desirable. From a careful examination of the items, it seemed to me that such a unification might readily have been achieved. I am sorry if my disappointment expressed itself in a form which seems to the editor captious. But it is not apparent to me

that there is no alternative between presenting no such index-matter and waiting for the completion of an index to the whole of the papers of the Continental Congress. Mr. Allen's own admirable calendars to the Jefferson, Madison and Monroe Papers furnish a type of an intermediate solution of the problem, applicable, one would think, wherever in the archives a large body of related matter is found.—THE REVIEWER.]